

Valco Melton closes the loop on coating performance

By combining precision hot-melt application, automated inspection and production data, Valco Melton is helping tape manufacturers improve consistency while reducing waste.

Valco Melton approaches coating as one connected production process. Its systems bring together adhesive melting and dosing, application, web handling, inline measurement, defect detection and production reporting. For tape manufacturers dealing with tighter tolerances, higher material costs, shorter runs and stricter traceability requirements, that combination is becoming a practical advantage. The aim is clear: Apply adhesive accurately, identify defects while production is running and give manufacturers reliable information about every finished roll.



From components to complete coating systems

Founded in 1952 and headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio (USA), Valco Melton supplies adhesive-dispensing and quality-assurance technology for industrial and packaging markets worldwide. Its global set-up includes 50 direct sales and service centres and a distribution network in more than 65 locations, supported by specialist engineering, sales and service teams. In Europe, the company's coating and laminating activities are centred in Orkoien, Spain, where one facility is dedicated entirely to coating technology and supported by laboratory capabilities for customer trials.

For tape manufacturers and converters, the company covers the full coating process: melting and dosing, adhesive application, web handling and quality inspection. Its LP Series coating lines are configured around the customer's production needs, with options including unwinding and rewinding systems, laminating stations, UV lamps, corona treatment, slitting and other line accessories. This single-supplier model is one of Valco Melton's main differentiators, especially for manufacturers looking to align coating, inspection and production data within one line concept.

Controlling adhesive across the web

The Akura range forms the core of Valco Melton's coating offer. Its applicators use independent hydraulic zones, each supplied by a gear pump, to control adhesive distribution across the web. Akura PF applicators can produce homogeneous coatings at widths of up to 3,000 millimetres and can be

configured for different adhesive channels, modules and nozzle arrangements, while Akura M applicators are designed for low coat weights and rapid hydraulic response during production ramp-up.

Recent LP Series developments have focused on process stability, easier changeovers and cleaner adhesive handling. Valco Melton has continued to improve tension control in web handling and has introduced a melting and dosing configuration that eliminates buffer tanks. Because buffer tanks are a common source of adhesive degradation and make cleaning between jobs more labour-intensive, removing them helps manufacturers change adhesives more efficiently and reduce avoidable process complications.

Inspection becomes part of production

Valco Melton has expanded the coverage of its Inspekt series, which can now inspect hot melts, UV hot melts, water-based adhesives and solvent-based adhesives. The system can also inspect the substrate before adhesive application and the coated face afterwards, giving manufacturers a clearer view of material condition before and after coating. In practical terms, this moves inspection closer to process control rather than leaving it as a final check.

Weight Inspekt uses inline infrared measurement to determine adhesive coat weight independently of substrate thickness. The system is now integrated for grammage control on every LP Series coating line Valco Melton delivers. When it detects a deviation, it can automatically adjust the gear pump serving the affected hydraulic zone without stopping production, supporting more stable coat-weight control and reducing reliance on manual correction.

Coat Inspekt uses vision technology to identify defects such as streaks, voids and excess adhesive. Artificial intelligence is used for automatic defect classification, reporting and defect-map generation, helping customers identify a broader range of faults and improve end-product traceability. The system is typically requested in sectors where flawless coating is critical, including medical tape, graphics, protective films and label manufacturing.

Traceability moves downstream

Through Connect Inspekt, defect roll maps can be transferred to the slitting station so affected sections can be located during the next production step. Depending on the slitter, the system can also support automatic removal of defective products. This makes inspection data directly usable in converting and reduces the risk that a localised fault leads to unnecessary rejection of otherwise usable material.

Track Inspekt extends the data connection to the customer's ERP system. Consumables can be scanned and incorporated into the production record, adding another layer of traceability around the materials used. For tape manufacturers supplying customers with strict documentation requirements, this strengthens the link between process conditions, product quality and batch-level information.

Reducing waste through tighter control

Accurate coat-weight control can limit adhesive over-application and improve consistency across the web. Automatic correction reduces the material lost while operators identify and adjust an out-of-tolerance zone, while inline defect positioning allows manufacturers to locate and remove only the affected sections during converting or slitting. The result is lower adhesive use, less scrap and fewer production interruptions.

Valco Melton's hot-melt and UV hot-melt capabilities also support manufacturers reviewing their adhesive systems and production routes. Its non-contact application technology is designed for lower grammages, while its inspection systems help maintain quality as products become more specialised. The environmental benefit depends on the adhesive, substrate, energy supply and line configuration, but more accurate application and faster correction reduce avoidable material use.

Testing before investment

Valco Melton's laboratory capabilities support customers developing new adhesive systems, lower coat weights, UV-curable hot melts, alternative raw materials and new substrate constructions. The company combines its own hot-melt coating expertise with the technical input of partners involved in the wider coating process, allowing manufacturers to test materials and understand production implications before investing in a new product launch.

The Orkoien lab has recently been upgraded with three UV lamps and corona treatment, and Valco Melton is now installing Weight Inspekt grammage control on the line. The company has also added another lab technician over the past year. Its next planned investment is an LP1600 line for the facility, which will serve as a demonstration tool and give customers more testing options.

Trends shaping coating equipment

Óscar Pastor, Global Sales Manager, Coating Division at Valco Melton, points to two trends that are expected to influence coating equipment over the next three to five years: the shift from solvent-based adhesives to UV-curable hot melts, and the rise of process automation. Shorter production runs are making faster job changes more important, which in turn requires more automated adjustment of working parameters.

These trends fit closely with Valco Melton's current development priorities. UV hot-melt capability, non-contact application, improved web handling, broader inspection coverage and stronger data flows all support production environments where manufacturers need to change products quickly without losing control over quality. For coating equipment suppliers, flexibility is no longer only about machine configuration; it is also about how quickly the line can be adjusted, verified and documented.

Entering a new phase with Graco

In May 2026, Valco Melton signed a definitive agreement to be acquired by Graco, Inc., a global supplier of fluid- and powder-handling technologies. The transaction is expected to close during Graco's fiscal third quarter of 2026, after which Valco Melton will become part of Graco's Industrial division. The companies have highlighted the complementary nature of their adhesive-application technologies, inspection capabilities and international customer networks.

For Valco Melton's coating business, the combination is expected to support further investment in production capabilities for coating in general and the tape industry in particular. More details about product development and operating structure are expected after closing.

Supporting Afera's market intelligence

Valco Melton's involvement with Afera has expanded since it joined in 2025. The company became a Supporter of the [Afera European Pressure-Sensitive Tape Market Report 2025](#), helping Afera launch a new annual source of European tape-market intelligence for its Members. For Valco Melton, the report provides valuable information while supporting wider knowledge-sharing between industry players.

The company is also a Platinum Sponsor of Afera's [2nd European Tape Week](#), taking place from 21 to 25 September 2026 in Porto, Portugal. The event combines the 12th Tape College, 69th Annual Conference, Afera Committee Meetings and the new Tabletop Exhibition. Having participated successfully in PSTC Tape Week for several years, Valco Melton sees a European platform as important and is using the event to share its latest improvements, raise awareness of its solutions and gain insight into where tape manufacturers' needs are heading.

One connected production process

Valco Melton's position in the tape value chain rests on a clear offer: one supplier covering melting and dosing, adhesive application, web handling, inspection and traceability. Backed by application testing, customised engineering, installation, training and after-sales service, that offer gives tape manufacturers a more controlled way to apply adhesive, verify quality and document production. As coating lines are asked to handle more adhesives, more substrates and shorter runs, that level of control is becoming harder to separate from competitiveness.

For more information, visit <https://afera.com/find-a-member/find-a-member/valco-melton.html>.
